

REMARKS

Claims 8, 9 and 11-14 remain pending. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesy of a telephonic interview conducted on January 13, 2011. In the interview, amendment of the claim language was discussed in an effort to avoid the currently cited art. Independent claim 8 has been amended in accordance with such discussion.

Claims 8, 9 and 11-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Adams et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,099,497) in view of Webster et al. (WO00/27463). In the 'Response to Arguments,' the Examiner emphasized the fact that the device shown in the Webster reference has two lumens at its distal end. The primary reference similarly and exclusively shows two balloons passing through two different openings at the distal end of the stent. Pursuant thereto, independent claim 8 has been amended so as to specify that both balloons are to pass through a single opening at the distal end of the stent. Full support for such limitation, both with regard to the apparatus and the method, is present in the application as filed at for example page 70, lines 21 – page 73, line 4 of the specification and in for example Figs. 68-77. It is respectfully submitted that the inclusion of such limitation effectively distinguishes the cited art. Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that the invention as claimed represents a marked departure from the previously described methods of treating a bifurcation. The simplified stent configuration not only simplifies its manufacturing process but also its method of deployment. As was previously pointed out, multiple distal openings require extremely precise longitudinal and rotational positioning of the stent in order to avoid "jailing" or otherwise obstructing the main or branch artery. The stent of the present invention with its single distal opening will more readily conform to the proximal portion of a bifurcation. It is therefore respectfully submitted that the claimed method of its treating a bifurcation effectively avoids obviousness in view of the teachings of the cited art.

In light of the above amendments and remarks, applicants earnestly believe the application to now be in condition for allowance and respectfully request that it be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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